

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 268841

EXDIS FOR AMBASSADOR YOUNG FROM UNA

FOLLOWING REPEAT TOKYO 17287 ACTION SECSTATE NOV 9.

QUOTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 17287

EXDIS

DEPT FOR EA, HOLBROOKE AND FOR SECRETARY

FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, JA

SUBJECT: STATE OF THE RELATIONSHIP

1. INTRODUCTION/SUMMARY: WHILE I STILL CONSIDER MYSELF NEW BOY ON BLOCK, I HAVE BEEN HERE LONG ENOUGH TO FORM SOME IMPRESSION OF STATE OF US-JAPAN RELATIONSHIP, WHICH I WANT TO SHARE WITH YOU AND SECRETARY VANCE. INCREASINGLY CONTENTIOUS ATMOSPHERE BETWEEN US AND JAPAN IS DISTURBING. PROBLEMS WE FACE ARE SERIOUS, AND JAPANESE PERFORMANCE IN SOME AREAS LEAVES MUCH TO BE DESIRED. CONFIDENTIAL

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HOWEVER, IN ASSESSING THESE PROBLEMS AND CONSIDERING SOLUTIONS, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE ASSIGN RESPONSIBILITY CAREFULLY, RECOGNIZE LIMITATIONS ON JAPANESE GOVERNMENT'S ABILITY TO INFLUENCE SITUATION, AND AVOID BEARING DOWN SO HARD ON SPECIFIC PROBLEMS THAT WE CAUSE OTHERS TO EMERGE. WE HAVE OUR DIFFICULTIES WITH JAPAN; WE NEED TO KEEP IN MIND THAT JAPANESE HAVE GOOD MANY WITH US AS WELL. SITUATION IS TROUBLESOME, BUT THERE IS CERTAINLY NO CAUSE FOR DESPAIR ON EITHER SIDE. END INTRODUCTION/SUMMARY.

2. CATALOG OF DIFFICULTIES IN US-JAPAN RELATIONS IS IMPRESSIVE.

ON ECONOMIC FRONT, WE ARE DISTRESSED BY MASSIVE BILATERAL TRADE DEFICIT AND FIND JAPAN'S OVERALL CURRENT ACCOUNT SURPLUS UN-ACCEPTABLE. OUR INDUSTRY IS HURT, OR CLAIMS INJURY, IN NUMBER OF AREAS. I AM CONVINCED ON BASIS OF MANY CONVERSATIONS THAT JAPANESE RECOGNIZE SERIOUSNESS OF THESE ISSUES FOR US-JAPAN RELATIONS, AND INDEED FOR ECONOMIC HEALTH OF INDUSTRIALIZED WEST. GOJ RESPONSE HAS UNDOUBTEDLY SEEMED SLOW AND INEFFECTIVE; JAPANESE HAVE LOOKED FOR SOLUTIONS, BUT ARE BY NO MEANS SURE WHERE THEY LIE.

3. PROBLEMS OF COURSE DO NOT END WITH TRADE IMBALANCE. WE HAVE JUST BEEN THROUGH TOUGH AND INCONCLUSIVE ROUND OF CIVIL AVIATION TALKS, AND ARE CERTAIN TO FACE CONTINUING PROBLEMS IN CIVIL AIR FIELD. FISHERIES QUESTIONS ARE LIKELY TO REGAIN PROMINENCE IN NEAR FUTURE, AS RESULT OF OUR DEMAND FOR VIRTUAL PROHIBITION OF JAPANESE SALMON AND TANNER-CRAB FISHING. NUCLEAR POLICY MAY WELL BE AN AREA OF FURTHER CONTENTION WITH JAPAN; GOJ WILL BE ACTIVE -- IF SKEPTICAL -- PARTICIPANT IN INFCE, AND AT END OF PROGRAM, ARGUMENT FOR ALTERNATIVE MODES WILL HAVE TO BE EXTREMELY CONVINCING.

4. IN OTHER AREAS AS WELL, THIS HAS BEEN DISQUIETING YEAR IN US-JAPAN RELATIONS. JAPANESE WERE, AND TO CERTAIN EXTENT STILL CONFIDENTIAL

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ARE, DISTURBED BY PLANS TO WITHDRAW TROOPS FROM KOREA. SOME IN GOJ ARE CONCERNED THAT CONGRESSIONAL INVESTIGATION OF KCIA ACTIVITIES COULD HAVE DOMESTIC POLITICAL REPERCUSSIONS AND DAMAGE JAPAN-KOREA RELATIONS. THERE IS RESENTMENT IN WASHINGTON OF JAPAN'S POOR PERFORMANCE TOWARD VIETNAMESE REFUGEES, AND CRITICISM ON HILL THAT JAPAN IS DOING LESS THAT IT SHOULD IN DEFENSE FIELD.

5. MOST OF PROBLEMS IN FOREGOING LITANY ARE FAMILIAR, PROBABLY INEVITABLE, AND ARE NEITHER SIDE'S "FAULT." BUT SPEED WITH WHICH THEY ARE RESOLVED AND EXTENT TO WHICH THEY DAMAGE OVERALL RELATIONSHIP ARE, I AM CONVINCED WELL WITHIN OUR POWER TO CONTROL, AND THEY WILL BE VERY MUCH AFFECTED BY PERCEPTIONS BOTH SIDES BRING TO PROBLEMS. AS MATTERS STAND, I BELIEVE THAT WE AND OUR JAPANESE ALLIES BOTH LABOR UNDER SOME SIGNIFICANT MISPERCEPTIONS. ON OUR SIDE, WE SEE A JAPAN ABLE BUT SOMEHOW UNWILLING TO MAKE STRUCTURAL ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENTS WHICH COULD RESOLVE OUR BALANCE-OF-PAYMENTS PROBLEMS -- A JAPAN WHICH IGNORES ITS MULTILATERAL RESPONSIBILITIES IN BOTH POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC FIELDS, AND WHICH REAPS BENEFITS IN AN UNEQUAL BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP WHERE US MAKES BULK OF SACRIFICES. FOR THEIR PART, JAPANESE SEE A US UNCERTAIN OF WHAT IT WISHES TO ACHIEVE INTERNATIONALLY AND, MORE PARTICULARLY, WHAT ROLE IT INTENDS TO PLAY IN ASIA, INSENSITIVE TO JAPAN'S SPECIAL ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL INTERESTS, AND GIVING LITTLE MORE THAN LIP SERVICE TO MAINTAINING ITS PARTNERSHIP WITH JAPAN.

6. THIS LATTER THEME -- THAT US REGARD FOR JAPAN HAS DIMINISHED -- IS SELDOM EXPRESSED OPENLY, BUT IS, I BELIEVE, RATHER WIDELY PERCEIVED. THERE IS SOME UNJUSTIFIED BUT REAL SUSPICION OF OUR MOTIVES -- E.G., THAT WE OBJECTED TO TOKAI MURA NOT BECAUSE OF ITS PROLIFERATION POTENTIAL BUT BECAUSE WE WANTED TO MAINTAIN JAPAN'S NUCLEAR DEPENDENCE. THERE IS ALSO CRITICISM OF OUR SO-CALLED INCONSISTENCY -- E.G., THAT WHILE PREACHING NECESSITIES OF INTERDEPENDENCE WE TAKE SWEEPING MEASURES TO PROTECT OUR FISHING INDUSTRY AT EXPENSE OF MAJOR DISLOCATION IN JAPAN'S. CONFIDENTIAL

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RECENT COMBINATION OF EVENTS AND EXPERIENCES -- INITIAL KOREAN TROOP WITHDRAWAL DECISION, HUMAN RIGHTS DIPLOMACY AS JAPANESE FEAR IT MAY AFFECT KOREA, NON-PROLIFERATION POLICY AS ORIGINALLY FORMULATED, AND MOUNTING US CRITICISM OF JAPAN'S ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE -- HAS LEFT CUMULATIVE IMPRESSION IN MINDS OF MANY JAPANESE THAT US IS AN ALLY NOT PARTICULARLY CONCERNED WITH EFFECTS OF ITS ACTIONS ON JAPAN. THIS UNCERTAINTY MAKES JAPANESE WORRIED, WARY AND RESENTFUL. FROM HERE I WOULD GUESS THAT SOME OF THOSE SAME SENTIMENTS ARE EQUALLY FELT IN WASHINGTON.

7. WE HAVE TAKEN CONSIDERABLE PRIDE IN RECENT PAST IN OUR ABILITY TO MANAGE POTENTIALLY TROUBLESOME ISSUES, PREVENTING THEM FROM ASSUMING POLITICAL COLORATION AND AFFECTING OTHER AREAS OF RELATIONSHIP. BOTH WE AND JAPANESE HAVE POINTED TO THIS AS MAJOR SIGN OF STRENGTH IN US-JAPAN RELATIONS. I MADE A SPEECH ALONG THESE LINES A FEW WEEKS AGO. BUT IT MAY BE THAT WE HAVE ONLY BEGUN TO PROVE THAT CONTENTION. TOKAI MURA WAS PERHAPS FIRST REALLY CRUCIAL TEST SINCE TEXTILE CRISIS OF OUR ABILITY TO RESOLVE POLITICALLY CHARGED ISSUE IN WHICH WE AND JAPANESE SIDE STARTED FROM DIAMETRICALLY OPPOSED POSITIONS. ECONOMIC PROBLEMS WE NOW CONFRONT ARE LIKELY TO PROVE MORE DIFFICULT THAN TOKAI MURA, AND OUTCOME IS LIKELY TO BE EVEN LESS TIDY. WE WILL BE DEALING WITH DIFFERENCES IN EMPHASIS, BALANCING COMPETING DOMESTIC CONSUMER AND PRODUCER INTERESTS, TALKING FROM BASIS OF DIFFERING TECHNICAL ANALYSES, ADDRESSING PROBLEMS SUCH AS STEEL IN CONTEXT OF MULTILATERAL SITUATION VERY MUCH IN FLUX AND OF WORLD ECONOMY WHOSE PERFORMANCE IS AS MYSTIFYING AS AT ANY TIME SINCE 1930'S.

8. SO WE ARE GOING TO HAVE SOME SERIOUS DIFFERENCE WITH JAPANESE IN MONTHS AHEAD. BUT INSOFAR AS OUR FUNDAMENTAL INTERESTS REMAIN SIMILAR, ULTIMATE PROGNOSIS IS GOOD. WE CAN NARROW OUR DIFFERENCES, AND MOVE MORE RAPIDLY TOWARD SOLUTIONS, BY APPROACHING ISSUES DISPASSIONATELY. THIS IS WHAT I HAVE BEEN TELLING JAPANESE CONFIDENTIAL

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HERE, AND SAME APPLIES TO US. WE SHOULD BE CAREFUL TO KEEP HEAT TURNED DOWN, AND TO PAY CLOSE ATTENTION -- AS I THINK WE HAVE TO DATE -- TO PARTICULAR NUANCES OF DOING BUSINESS HERE. WE SHOULD NOT LECTURE JAPANESE ON THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES AS WE SEE

THEM. JAPANESE DO NOT REACT CONSTRUCTIVELY TO WHAT THEY PERCEIVE AS CONCERTED PUBLIC PRESSURE FROM OUTSIDE -- TENDENCY INSTEAD IS FOR INTROVERTED "BELEAGUED JAPAN" SYNDROME TO DOMINATE. DEFENSIVE, TRUCULENT AND SOMEWHAT NATIONALISTIC RESPONSES ARE APT TO RESULT. SOVIET UNION PROVOKED IMPRESSIVELY UNIFIED NATIONALIST REACTION DURING FISHERIES NEGOTIATIONS EARLIER THIS YEAR. TOKAI MURA, HAD IT NOT BEEN HANDLED WELL, WOULD HAVE BEEN EQUALLY DRAMATIC RALLY POINT. JAPANESE PRESS TENDS INCREASINGLY TO HIGHLIGHT NARROWLY DEFINED NATIONAL INTERESTS IN COMMENTING ON INTERNATIONAL ISSUES. TO EXTENT POSSIBLE WE SHOULD AVOID PROVIDING GRIST FOR THAT MILL.

9. THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT WE SHOULD STOP TRYING TO GET JAPAN TO DO BETTER IN NUMBER OF AREAS, OR THAT WE NEED APPROACH JAPAN ONLY WITH KID GLOVES. ON CONTRARY, WE NEED TO KEEP UP PRESSURE ON CURRENT ACCOUNT SURPLUS, BUT CAREFULLY MODULATED AND UNOBTUSIVELY APPLIED. WHEN WE ASK JAPANESE TO DO SOMETHING, WHETHER IN ECONOMIC, POLITICAL OR DEFENSE FIELDS, WE OWE THEM AS DETAILED AN EXPOSITION AS WE CAN PROVIDE OF WHAT SPECIFICALLY WE HAVE IN MIND. WE HAVE NOT ALWAYS DONE THIS, AND RESULT HAS SOMETIMES BEEN CONFUSION, INACTION, AND RESENTMENT ON BOTH SIDES. WE SHOULD TAKE CARE TO DISH OUT BLAME, AND PRAISE, IMPARTIALLY. WE KNOW, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT EUROPEAN STEEL AS WELL AS JAPANESE STEEL THREATENS OUR INDUSTRY; JAPAN MORE THAN WEST GERMANY HAS MADE MAJOR EFFORTS TO MEET ITS OWN GROWTH TARGETS. WE OUGHT NOT LOSE SIGHT OF SENSE OF EXTREME VULNERABILITY JAPANESE FEEL. THAT VULNERABILITY WILL ALWAYS BE THE PRIME DETERMINANT OF THE WAY THEY APPROACH INTERNATIONAL ISSUES, WHETHER ECONOMIC OR POLITICAL. AND WE SHOULD ACKNOWLEDGE POLITICAL AND CULTURAL PROBLEMS JAPAN FACES IN ADDRESSING THESE COMPLEX QUESTIONS -- LIMITATIONS GREATER THAN WE CUSTOMARILY ADMIT ON GOJ ABILITY TO DIRECT ITS ECONOMY OR TO TAKE DIFFICULT

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POLICY DECISIONS SPEEDILY. BOTH WE AND JAPANESE KNOW, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT JAPAN'S EXPORT-BIASED ECONOMY MUST BE RESTRUCTURED, BUT ACHIEVING THAT WILL TAKE CONSIDERABLE TIME. PATIENT PERSISTENCE BY BOTH USAND GOJ WILL BE REQUIRED.

10. ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT TASKS FOR POLICY MAKERS ON OUR SIDE, I AM CONVINCED, IS TO RESIST TEMPTATION TO LINK ISSUES, TO CONNECT JAPAN'S PERFORMANCE IN ONE AREA WITH OUR RESPONSE IN ANOTHER. THIS APPEARS TO BE HAPPENING WITH GROWING FREQUENCY ON THE HILL WHERE, FOR EXAMPLE, JAPAN'S TREATMENT OF INDOCHINA REFUGEES WAS MAJOR FACTOR IN DEFEAT OF UNU APPROPRIATIONS REQUEST, AND WHERE CONTRAST BETWEEN JAPANESE ECONOMIC STRENGTH AND MILITARY WEAKNESS IS DRAWING INCREASING CRITICISM. I HOPE ADMINISTRATION SPOKESMEN CAN CONTINUE TO ARGUE FORCEFULLY AGAINST THISSIMPLISTIC AND ULTIMATELY DESTRUCTIVE APPROACH TO US-JAPAN RELATIONS.

11. IT IS EQUALLY IMPORTANT AS WE ADDRESS THESE ISSUES NOT TO

ALLOW OUR CONCENTRATION ON PROBLEMS CONFRONTING US TO OVERSHADOW ESSENTIAL HEALTH OF US-JAPAN RELATIONSHIP OR MAJOR BENEFITS WE DERIVE FROM IT. WE ARE ECONOMIC COMPETITORS TO BE SURE, BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY, WE ARE ECONOMIC PARTNERS WITH A TRADE RELATIONSHIP VITAL TO WELL-BEING OF BOTH COUNTRIES. WE CONTINUE TO COOPERATE IN INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC FORUMS, BECAUSE OUR BROAD ECONOMIC INTERESTS ARE SIMILAR. JAPAN'S STAKE IN AN OPEN WORLD-TRADING SYSTEM IS, IF ANYTHING, EVEN MORE CRUCIAL THAN OUR OWN, AND JAPAN'S BASIC APPROACH -- IN THE MTN, IN OTHER FORUMS, AND BILATERALLY -- REFLECTS THIS.

12. IN POLITICAL FIELD, JAPAN IS TAKING A LARGER ROLE, AND ITS EXPANDED INFLUENCE SEEMS CERTAIN TO CONTINUE TO BE APPLIED IN WAYS BENEFICIAL TO US INTERESTS. FUKUDA'S TRIP TO SEA IN AUGUST WAS, IN JAPANESE TERMS, MAJOR INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVE WHICH
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SHOULD CONTRIBUTE TO STABILITY AND WELL-BEING OF REGION. IT IS NOT INCONCEIVABLE THAT THIS MODEST AND WELL EXECUTED VENTURE COULD BE HARBINGER OF OTHER INITIATIVES IN OTHER AREAS. PROCESS OF INCREASING SELF-ASSERTION IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS WILL CONTINUE TO BE SLOW FOR JAPANESE, BUT TREND IS IN RIGHT DIRECTION AND DESERVES ENCOURAGEMENT.

13. JAPANESE ARE ALSO INCREASINGLY ACTIVE IN UN, WHERE THEY ARE PROBABLY OUR MOST CONSISTENTLY HELPFUL PARTNERS, AND IN TERMS OF RELATIONS WITH USSR AND PRC, WHERE IN MODEST FADHION JAPANESE POLICIES CONTINUE USEFULLY TO COMPLEMENT OUR OWN. IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, WE EXPECT JAPAN TO PARTICIPATE IN WHATEVER POLITICAL/ECONOMIC CONSORTIA WE AND BRITISH MAY DEVISE TO HASTEN MAJORITY RULE. JAPAN, THOUGH INATELY RELUCTANT TO INTERVENE IN AREASE SO FAR REMOVED AND WHERE JAPANESE INTERESTS ARE NOT IMMEDIATELY APPARENT, PROBABLY WILL DO SO -- OUT OF GRADUALLY MATURING SENSE OF INTERNATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY AS WELL AS OUT OF DESIRE TO HELP US. WE SAW SIMILAR REACTION ON MORE MINOR SCALE IN EARLY SEPTEMBER WHEN JAPAN PROMPTLY SPOKE OUT IN SUPPORT OF CANAL TREATIES.

14. WE ARE OF COURSE MILITARY ALLIES AS WELL, AND HERE WE HAVE GOOD REASON TO BE PLEASED WITH RELATIONSHIP AND CONTENT WITH STATE OF ITS DEVELOPMENT. WE CONTINUE TO ASSERT THAT WE DO NOT WANT JAPAN TO PLAY REGIONAL MILITARY ROLE, AND THAT POSITION IS GENERALLY UNDERSTOOD HERE. YET IT IS OFTEN MISUNDERSTOOD IN CONGRESS, AND IT IS IMPORTANT THAT POINT BE MADE THERE. JAPAN CANNOT TAKE ON MAJOR MILITARY ROLE -- ITS BODY POLITIC IS NO MORE READY FOR THAT TODAY THAN IT WAS TEN YEARS AGO. NOR COULD JAPANESE REARMAMENT FAIL TO HAVE PROFOUNDLY UNSETTLING EFFECT ON ASIA AS A WHOLE. SIGNIFICANTLY EXPANDED JAPANESE MILITARY ROLE THUS IS SOMETHING WE CANNOT ACHIEVE AND THAT WE WOULD BE FOOLISH TO STRIVE FOR. BUT WITHIN THESE STRICT AND I THINK LOGICAL LIMITS, JAPAN IS DOING A GOOD DEAL TO STRENGTHEN CAPABILITY OF ITS FORCES. THIS MEANS SPENDING MONEY. JSDF IS GOING TO BUY, THIS YEAR OR NEXT, F-15 AND P-3C. A BIT FURTHER ALONG SHE PLANS

TO BUY THE E-2C. JAPANESE ARE ALSO, TENTATIVELY AND WITH
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AGONIZINGLY SLOW STEP-BY-STEP LEGAL JUSTIFICATIONS, PREPARING
TO TAKE ON A LARGER SHARE OF COST OF MAINTAINING US FORCES
HERE. WE WANT GOJ TO DO MORE IN ALL THESE AREAS, AND WILL KEEP
PRESSING THEM TO DO MORE, BUT EFFORTS TO DATE ADD UP TO SIGNIFI-
CANT PROGRESS IN JAPANESE DEFENSE PERFORMANCE AND MAKE FOR HIGHLY
SATISFACTORY DEFENSE RELATIONSHIP.

15. MAJOR POINT TO BE MADE IN ALL OF THIS IS THAT US-JAPAN
RELATIONSHIP -- DESPITE NUMEROUS PROBLEMS IT ENCOMPASSES
NOW -- CONTINUES TO BE MAJOR SOURCE OF STRENGTH FOR BOTH OUR
COUNTRIES. JAPANESE, FRUSTRATING THOUGH THEY SOMETIMES CAN BE,
ARE PROBABLY MOST COOPERATIVE AND SUPPORTIVE ALLY WE HAVE. IN
DEALING WITH PLETHORA OF ISSUES WE FACE, WE NEED TO BEAR IN MIND
ESSENTIAL COMMONALITY OF INTERESTS WE HAVE WITH JAPAN, ACKNOWLEDGE
DIFFICULTIES JAPAN TOO FACES IN SEEKING SOLUTIONS TO THESE
PROBLEMS, AND ABOVE ALL NOT ALLOW DIFFICULTIES IN ONE AREA TO
AFFECT WAY WE DEAL WITH JAPAN IN OTHERS. WE AND JAPAN CAN
MANAGE AND SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS, AND WE SHOULD HAVE CONFIDENCE IN
OUR ABILITY TO DO SO. CERTAINLY THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT OF IMPORTANCE
OF THAT TASK. I HAVE NEVER MADE A SECRET OF MY STRONG BELIEF
THAT FROM US POINT OF VIEW, ASIA WITH ITS VAST POPULATIONS AND
RESOURCES IS MOST IMPORTANT REGION IN WORLD. OUR HISTORIC OUTWARD
THRUST IS TOWARD ASIA.

16. NONE OF FOREGOING IS PARTICULARLY NEW OR NOVEL. BUT AS I
READ MOOD IN WASHINGTON FROM THIS DISTANCE, THERE SEEMS TO BE
REAL DANGER THAT PREOCCUPATION WITH ISSUES WHICH DIVIDE UNITED
STATES AND JAPAN WILL OBSCURE, AND ULTIMATELY WEAKEN, TIES OF
MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING, RESPECT AND INTEREST WHICH UNITE US. IF
THAT HAPPENS, OUR ABILITY TO MANAGE OUR PROBLEMS WILL DIMINISH
AND WE WILL HAVE SET OFF DEGENERATIVE CYCLE DIFFICULT TO BRING
UNDER CONTROL OUR RELATIONSHIP IS VITAL TO US BOTH, BUT WE ARE
THE ONES WITH POWER TO DESTROY IT.
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17. I WILL BE GRATEFUL IF YOU WILL BRING THE ABOVE TO THE
ATTENTION OF THOSE IN WASHINGTON AND ELSEWHERE WHO MIGHT WISH TO
HEAR MY VIEWS. I TRUST ALSO THAT THEY WILL BE PRESENTED TO
PRESIDENT CARTER.
MANSFIELD UNQTE VANCE

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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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